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Letter dated 26 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the following statement on the situation in Darfur, western Sudan, issued on 26 May 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 26 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the situation in Darfur, western Sudan, issued 26 May 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the decision by the Government of the Sudan to lift restrictions on humanitarian agency workers travelling to Darfur. The European Union expects that the Sudanese authorities will implement the decision expeditiously and that access to Darfur for humanitarian agencies will be unhindered at all levels.

The European Union is deeply troubled by the recent report of the acting United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Darfur region. The European Union calls on the Government of the Sudan to publicly condemn the actions of the Janjaweed militias in Darfur and to bring the militias under control. The Government of the Sudan has a responsibility to effectively protect local populations and internally displaced persons from gross abuses by armed groups. The European Union welcomes the establishment by the Government of the Sudan of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights violations by armed groups in Darfur and expects that swift action will be taken on findings of the Commission.

The European Union commends the work of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in highlighting the humanitarian crisis in Darfur and expresses its strong commitment to work with the United Nations to combat malnutrition, disease and the threat of famine in the Darfur region. The European Union welcomes OCHA's decision to convene a donors' meeting on 3 June in Geneva and will participate fully in the occasion.

The European Union fully supports the work of the African Union to establish a ceasefire commission and monitoring mechanism for the Darfur region. The European Union strongly urges all parties to cooperate fully with the African Union and to participate in coordination meetings as scheduled.

The candidate countries Bulgaria and Romania, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.